

"ELI, ELI, LAMA UHZABTANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?" (Matthew 27:46)

This anguished cry is a quotation from Psalm 22:1 – "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? (Why are you) far from my deliverance, (and from) the words of my groaning?" (We could also translate the first part of verse 1 as "My God, my God, for what reason have you abandoned me?")

This is only the latest and worst of a series of abandonments! First Judas Iscariot abandoned and betrayed Him. Then in the Garden of Gethsemane His disciples forsook Him and fled. Then the very crowds that had acclaimed Him five days before, abandoned Him and cried out with the mob, "Crucify Him!" And now it appears that God has abandoned Him!

Two questions seem to cry out for answers, in connection with this text:

- (1) What does it mean to be forsaken by God?
- (2) Why was Jesus forsaken by God on the cross?

Let us attempt to answer the first question:

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FORSAKEN BY GOD?

A. Does it mean to be utterly abandoned and cut off from the presence of God?

On the human level, what does it mean to be abandoned and cut off?